An American Publishers' Group Reports on German, Austrian Book Publishing

The two reports, one on German book publishing and one on Austrian, which are summarized in the following article, were written by five prominent American book publishers who visited Germany and Austria last summer at the invitation of General Clay and the Department of the Army. Of this group, Edward M. Crane, president of the D. Van Nostrand Company and chairman of the committee, and George P. Brett, Jr., president of The Macmillan Company, were nominated by the American Textbook Publishers Institute; William Sloane, president of William Sloane Associates, and Robert deGraff, president of Pocket Books, Inc., were nominated by the American Book Publishers Council. The fifth member, H. Stahley Thompson, director of production and research for Rinehart & Company, was requested to attend by the other four members

At the invitation of General Lucius C. Clay and the Department of the Army, five American book publishers visited Austria and Germany last summer for the purpose of surveying and studying the book industries of these countries. A secondary purpose of their visit was to view the work being done by the Publications Branch of the Information Control Division and the Educational Branch in Germany and the Information Service Branch in Austria. The individual members of the committee Edward M. Crane, chairman; George P. Brett, Jr.; William Sloane; Robert deGraff, and H. Stahley Thompson fully realized the informational and educational difficulties inherent in the government of post-war Germany and the importance of a relatively healthy and independent book publishing industry to the industrial reconstruction of the country and the cultural and educational rehabilitation of the German peoples.

The five members of the publishing group departed for Germany on June 19. They spent approximately one week in Austria, several days in Switzerland and five weeks in the American zone of Germany, visiting during this time the cities of Berlin, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Stuttgart, Munich, Nuremberg, Vienna and Zurich. Briefer periods of time were spent in many other places, including Wiesbaden, Hochst, Heilbronn, Pfungstadt and Ausgsburg. No attempt was made by the committee to visit the British and French Zones of Western Germany or of Austria.

In the course of its mission the members of the committee interviewed several hundred persons connected with Austrian and German book publishing, book production and book distribution. They met and conferred with almost all of the American personnel of the Army's informational and educational agencies and with the executives of the Joint Export-Import Agency, particularly those who dealt with books. They interviewed German publishers, wholesale and retail booksellers, editors and librarians. They talked to German writers, artists, officials and discussed the various phases of the German book problem with papermakers, printers, engravers and many others.

Subsequent to their return to the United States, two reports were written by the committee and published for use by the Department of the Army and by American book publishers—one on Austrian publishing and one on German publishing. The report on Austria was written first and published as a pamphlet in Vienna, the latter part of 1948. The German report has recently been published in New York in the form of a 171-page, hard cover book, "German Book Publishing and Allied Subjects" under the imprint of The Visiting Committee of American Book Publishers. The manufacturing of this handsome publication was contributed to by the following: Al Margolies, design; Technical Composition Company, composition; Perkins & Squier, paper; Albert D. Smith & Co., cloth. H. Wolff Book Mfg. Co., presswork and binding.

For the purposes of this article, the two reports will be dealt with separately. The Report on German Publishing is divided into sixteen sections with the recommendations of the committee listed at the back of each section. These sections are: The Mission; Perspective on German Publishing; German General Publishing; Technical and Medical Publishing; Educational Publishing; Mass Editions; German Paper Resources; Book Manufacturing Facilities; The Distribution System: The Information Control Division, Publications Branch; The Problems of Control; Overt Books; The Translation Program; Literary Rights; The Economic vs. The Cultural Problem; and The American Houses.

In general, the first part of this report attempts a survey of the German publishing field, and the second part, from Section Ten on, is basically concerned with the problems of the Informational Control Division, the American Houses and allied matters. The recommendations offered by the committee in this report are to be considered in the light of the whole problem of book production in Germany and not as separate entities.

All the available 400 and some copies of the Report on German Book Publishing, which were made available to the American Book Publishers Council have been distributed. Two hundred copies were given to the Department of the Army for distribution in Germany; and the American Book Publishers Council and the American Textbook Publishers Institute mailed copies to each of their members.

GERMAN BOOK PUBLISHING AND ALLIED SUBJECTS

Commencing with a recapitulation of the broad historical outline of German book publishing and some of its dominant characteristics, the report on German publishing notes "that both culturally and economically the German book publishing industry has played a far more basic role in the life of the nation than has been the case in the United States." German schools customarily used a very large number of textbooks per individual pupil, and more stress was placed upon the book, rather than the teacher, as the fundamental source of instruction. This importance of books is further exemplified by the emphasis placed by the Germans on exports. Books have always been regarded in Germany as the spearhead of German science and technology, the vanguard of German culture, and the cursors of German trade.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the report points out, the German system of book distribution was unrivaled. Bookselling was regarded as a profession, German libraries increased at a rapid rate and were incredibly complete, and German printing machinery became standard equipment for printing plants everywhere. Leipzig was the book center of the world.

Although World War I left the German book publishing industry virtually untouched in so far as its producing and distributing mechanisms were concerned, it marked the point when American and British publishing began to assume greater world importance. In the opinion of the committee, it was the rise to power of the Nazis from 1932 onward which dealt a

mortal blow to the century-old prestige of the industry—"it was Hitler and not the RAF and the AAF who dealt the mortal blow to German book publishing." The report states that "It is highly probable that even if World War II had not occurred the German book publishing industry would have shown a steady downward trend particularly in export sales and a continuing loss of prestige throughout the world."

PUBLISHING DIFFICULTIES IN POST-WAR GERMANY

The difficulties German publishers have been faced with since the end of the war, according to the report, have indeed been great. "The war damage has been so extensive that many firms are inadequately housed and in inconveniently located buildings. The paper shortage created an artificial market of almost limitless size for all books, which the return of the commodity to the free market has probably greatly reduced. The impact of currency reform has been formidable; books must once more compete with other goods for the consumer's marks, but almost no publishers have sales staffs or other adequate provision for securing what share of the market remains to them. Capital in the form of Reichsmarks has been greatly reduced by currency reform, and the publisher, who must pay his suppliers promptly and wait for his collections from the booksellers, is in an unenviable position. German banks are wary of lending money to publishers. The problem of finding and developing new writers is complex in modern Germany and its solution is made even harder by the high cost and difficulties of travel. . . ."

Added to these material difficulties is the fact that "In the space of less than two decades the personnel of German publishing has undergone two very severe screenings: nazification and denazification." The report goes on to say that immediately upon the cessation of hostilities and by the terms of surrender, "no German was eligible to publish anything, not even a package label. By November of 1945, however, the first licenses to publish were being issued by OMGUS (Office of Military Government United States). The regulations governing the issuance of publishing licenses provided that except in rare instances they could be granted only to human individuals— 'natural person' —and not to corporations. No license could be issued until the applicant had successfully passed the rigorous requirements of the denazification regulations. In general, the submission of a reasonable publishing program and some evidence of fitness also were required before a license was issued, but it was not a part of our policy to refuse licenses to applicants with inadequate financial backing. It was, however, an essential part of the licensing process that no license granted could be considered a property right or be transferable in any way."

GERMAN CLASSICS FIRST RESTORED TO PRINT

In the section on German General Publishing, the report points out that the first thing the newly-licensed German general publisher did was to restore the classics of German literature to print. The second source of material for publication was contemporary books from abroad. Good indigenous new German writing was and is almost impossible to obtain and the report contends that because of this dearth of good fiction in Germany, it is probable that English, French and American fiction will have to fill this gap for many years to come. Furthermore, the most conspicuous deficiency in all German publishing is in the field of juvenile literature.

Among its recommendations on this section, the report notes that "German writers need assurance of world copyright protection and of payment for their foreign rights in a useful currency. Selected German publishers, including some of the smaller ones who specialize in juveniles, should be sent to America to study the techniques of the American children's book field."

In the section on Technical and Medical Publishing, the report states that "Before Hitler, German publishing in the fields of science, technology, and medicine was of international influence and significance. German books in these fields were famous throughout the world and were a powerful factor in sustaining a high world opinion of German science. They were also the heart and core of the German book export business. . . . Much the same pattern holds true for German art books and portfolios. Munich and Vienna were the two major world centers of art publication for decades and their output of such books followed the general trend of scientific book exporting."

TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC BOOKS, PRE-WAR AND TODAY

In prewar days the world looked to Germany specifically for the technical, medical, and scientific book in highly specialized sections of these fields, and editions as low as 500 copies could sometimes be published because of low production costs and subsidies. Today, American technical book publishing has emerged as a vital factor in world markets, although the German industry is struggling hard to reclaim its former world position. "It must be remembered," the report says, "that by the terms of the surrender and subsequent international agreements German science and industry have been put into hobbles for the safety of the rest of mankind. Research is forbidden in a number of fields. . . .

"This committee does not believe that, in view of the grave need for educational and cultural books within Germany, the German technical book publishing industry should adopt a policy of publishing primarily for the export market."

In relation to this, the committee recommends that "During the period of textbook shortage, such export agreements as the Joint Export-Import Agency shall approve be limited to specific books which are international tools of world scientific utility. Exports to non-Germanic countries of other scientific and technical works during this period should be limited to not over 10 per cent of the publisher's gross annual volume of technical, medical, and scientific publishing in order to conserve paper supplies for domestic needs. That American technical and scientific periodicals and books be made available to German authors, libraries, writers, research scientists in greater numbers."

The educational publishing program in the United States Zone of Germany constituted, as the members of the committee were aware, one of the most difficult problems. They were informed that "educational books for classroom use were being produced in the American Zone at the annual rate of about 1½ books per student, for all grades from elementary through college. The Russians were reported to be producing between 7 and 8 texts per student; the English, 5; and the French, 4."

"By the end of January, 1948, only five and a quarter million textbooks had been produced in the American Zone, or about 2½ books per pupil. Realizing the extreme seriousness of this situation, Military Government purchased and allocated enough paper to produce 16 million schoolbooks, a figure estimated to be minimal for the requirements of the schools for the year 1948-1949."

EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING: AN OCCUPATION PROBLEM

Because of the difficulty encountered thus far by the Educational Branch of the occupation forces in coping with the problem of German textbooks, the committee believes that a separate report would be required to do full and detailed justice to these problems. The committee further recommends: "Either closer and more frequent liaison between the Military Governor and the Educational Branch, or delegation of responsibility for the Branch to the Deputy Governor with similar close liaison. Full clarification of our educational goals in Germany and the powers we contemplate exercising to secure them."

Following the section on Mass Editions, the report recommends "The establishment of a postwar mass-edition publishing industry in Germany should be encouraged. The economic program should facilitate such a development by permitting the importation of the necessary machinery and possibly paper to produce them. If the German capital required to do so cannot be found, recourse should be had to American capital. The importation of low-priced books in English from both Britain and the United States should be encouraged and facilitated. In order to secure the wide distribution necessary for mass-edition publishing, bookselling restrictions should be removed in the case of cheap books at least."

In the section on German Paper Resources, the report notes that "War damage to pulp and paper mills, though extensive, seems not to have been so crippling as in the case of printing and binding plants." Despite this fact, shortages of paper were the basis for the majority of the complaints heard by the committee from German publishers. In order to alleviate this difficulty, the report recommends: "Paper, pulpwood, and other necessary raw materials should be imported, from the eastern zone, from Austria, and elsewhere, as needed to increase production to full capacity rather than import printing papers. No paper should be exported anywhere until domestic demands are fully satisfied."

CONCENTRATION OF INDUSTRY IN EASTERN ZONE

The report relates in the section on Manufacturing Facilities how "The period after World War I saw the intensification of a development which was to have serious consequences at the end of the second. More and more, the great centers of book production and of warehousing and distribution became concentrated in eastern Germany, notably around Leipzig and Berlin, while the bulk of the bookstores and markets lay in the western area." In the ensuing war and subsequent devastation, German production facilities, located as they were in industrial cities where the bombing was most severe, suffered heavy damages. "In the Western zones, the destruction of composition and printing equipment was an estimated 40 per cent of the total located in the area. Binding facilities were even harder hit; perhaps 65 per cent of all the available equipment was destroyed or seriously damaged."

Although the handicaps in many cases are genuinely insuperable, the members of the committee were impressed with the energy and incredible pains that German printers and binders are taking to make the best of the situation.

The report stresses the point that "Bookbinding equipment is unquestionably the most serious of the problems of supply which confront the operators of German printing plants," and that "The introduction of American methods and machinery could probably increase German binding output by at least 50 per cent."

GERMAN BOOK PRODUCTION AREAS CANNOT BE FURTHER DIVIDED

In summarizing this section, the committee believes that "the manufacturing facilities for books in the American Zone are adequate for present production needs but not capable of any great increase in production without additional machinery and reengineering of existing production methods. This report will fail of its purpose if it is not evident from it that German book production cannot be divided up into a series of small boxes. The division of the country between West and East is already sufficiently hampering and tragic; to create a separate and wholly independent Western book industry, from the paper and manufacturing levels on through the distribution system, is to duplicate a vast amount of work and organization performed before the country became a divided entity. No further subdivisions would appear to us practical. The British, French, and American Zones, if they are to produce effective pub-

lishing, must be viewed as a unit, duplication of facilities avoided, interchange of goods and services everywhere made as easy as possible, and the problem viewed as a single whole."

The Distribution System for German books is well over one hundred years old. According to the observations of the American committee, "The war and the surrender have only superficially altered the traditional German pattern, which has shown an almost reflex physical vitality in reconstituting itself in the past three years."

FRANKFURT THE "LEIPZIG" OF WESTERN GERMANY

The city of Leipzig was the hub in the pre-war system of German book distribution. The bulk of German bookbinding and warehousing was performed there, all the major wholesaling operations were conducted from there, and a magnificent system of railway "book cars" ran out of it to every corner of Germany. The basic organization of the German book trade, the Börsenverein, was located there. To this organization belonged publishers, wholesalers and retailers. In Leipzig, the Börsenverein issued the *Börsenblatt*, the weekly trade journal; it supervised the training of booksellers; it served as a committee of the whole for the entire German book trade.

The decentralization of Germany after the surrender resulted in the reorganization of the distribution and control system on a Land rather than a national basis. Frankfurt appears to have been selected for the role of a new Leipzig by both the Western Allies and the Germans themselves. Also, a Frankfurt *Börsenblatt* has been instituted.

Although the war resulted in the destruction of thousands of German bookstores, the German bookselling trade has rehabilitated itself with amazing speed and vitality. Exclusive of some 2,000 retail bookshops in the Russian Zone, there are between 4,500 and 5,000 shops in the American, British and French Zones combined.

The recommendations of the committee on the German book distribution system are: "That Frankfurt become the Leipzig of the western German state, and that requisite facilities for this purpose be allocated or created in the city. That means of distribution for books be provided out of Frankfurt comparable to those formerly available out of Leipzig. That bookseller-licensing requirements be abolished or greatly liberalized in order to make books more generally accessible. That the Börsenverein be encouraged to improve the quality, interest, and authoritativeness of the Frankfurt edition of the *Börsenblatt*. That the new German constitution contain explicit safeguards against possible use of the centralized German book-distribution system as an instrument of censorship, discrimination, or suppression of the freedom of speech."

As was stated earlier, this report from Section Ten onward is basically concerned with the problems of the Information Control Division, the American Houses, and allied matters. Because of the exigencies of space, these will not be dealt with here.

However, it should be pointed out that the accomplishments of the Publications Branch of the ICD are great. From the beginning of the occupation to July of 1948, 387 book and periodical publishers had been licensed. These publishers had produced some 7,250 books and pamphlets and had founded 383 periodicals. Almost 300 contracts for American books have been placed, under the translation program, to over 70 publishers.

REPORT ON AUSTRIAN BOOK PUBLISHING

The Report on Austrian Book Publishing is a 47-page paper pamphlet which was published in Vienna soon after the American publishers' group visit there during July of 1948. Inasmuch as Austria was never an occupied country in the sense that Germany is, the difficulties confronting the visiting committee were never as complex, or so seemingly insoluble, in some instances, as they were in Germany.

According to the report, "There are currently some 400 book publishers of all types in Austria—a figure which is clearly too large and probably about twice the pre-Anschluss figure. A great many publishers will have to go to the wall in the next few years. . . ."

"In prewar times the Austrian and German book publishing industries were a single integrated industry serving the German-speaking world. The leading German book publishers usually maintained offices in Vienna, and the major Viennese publishers had branches in Leipzig or other German publishing centers. Indeed, much of the output of Austrian publishers which was exported to Germany was channeled through Leipzig to outside markets. The two publishing industries thus complemented each other.

"The war dislocations have now resulted in creating two almost separate industries, each struggling to attain autonomy. For geographical and economic reasons alike, this is neither practical nor desirable. . . . As a liberated country, Austria is in a position to export books by her own volition and through her own economic mechanism. Unfortunately, her most vital export market, Germany, is not open to her. In particular, the western zones of Germany, which formerly contained some 75 per cent of the German national book market, are closed." The recommendation of the committee on this matter is: "That the Joint Export-Import Agency authorize at once the exchange of periodicals and books between Austria and Germany."

"Important, indeed vital, as we feel the opening of the west German market to be for the economic rehabilitation of the Austrian book industry," the report goes on to say, "we are equally convinced that trade with the east should be built up by every legitimate, practicable means. Geographically and logically, the Soviet sphere of influence should constitute a major Austrian book market. . . ."

In relation to a proposal for the establishment of a new newspaper and periodical plant in Vienna to be equipped with imported American printing machinery at a cost of between $500,000 and $1,000,000, the committee says, "In the event that such a venture is passed upon favorably, it would appear wise to make sure that the plant possessed enough space and machinery for the manufacture of at least a few book titles."

For the successful publication of low-priced mass editions, the committee believes that by itself the Austrian market is not large enough to justify the sizable printings required to make low production costs and low selling prices possible. Again it is a question of opening up trade with western Germany.

As in Germany, there appears to be a demand in Austria for books in English. At present the only such books available are British editions. The committee contends that "it is of the utmost importance to make possible . . . the importation of American books into Austria and other European countries, or else the establishment in Europe of a publisher of low-priced American books in English."

In regard to educational publishing, the committee reported that the situation in Austria was far less grave than in Germany. In general it seemed to be in competent hands and the group had no fundamental reorganization to propose. Among other things it recommended the "establishment of a program of visiting American educational experts in the various fields."

For the Army's translation program, the committee recommends that the fundamental choice of books suitable for translation and publication in Germany and Austria should be made in these countries rather than in Washington. Also, more good children's books should be secured, particularly animal stories for the younger group and stories of tolerance for the older group.

As in the preceding summary of the Report on German Book Publishing, no attempt will be made here to cover the problems of information control in Austria, the object of which is to inculcate in the hearts and minds of the German peoples a feeling for the principles of freedom.

NEWS of the Week

U. S. BOOK TRADE ASSOCIATIONS TO SPONSOR VISITING GERMANS

Three separate groups of German book publishers and writers, all of which will arrive in this country about May 1, will be sponsored during their six-week visit in the United States by both the American Textbook Publishers Institute and the American Book Publishers Council. Two of these German groups, one consisting of six German textbook publishers and the other of five German textbook writers, will be sponsored by the ATPI; the third group, which is under the sponsorship of the American Book Publishers Council, is composed of nine general trade publishers. The purpose of their visit to this country, which is a part of the general cultural exchange program of the Office of Military Government U. S., is to study American book publishing methods, including editorial procedure, manufacturing processes and methods of book distribution.

The trip of these publishers to the U. S. was in part based upon the recommendations of the group of American publishers who visited Germany last year to advise the Department of the Army on German book publishing and allied matters (see page 1598).

Itineraries for these three groups will be worked out by the respective sponsoring trade associations and will probably include separate luncheons in New York upon their arrival, as well as trips to Chicago, Washington, Philadelphia and Boston. During the trips they will visit schools, colleges, publishers, booksellers, manufacturing plants, government agencies, etc. All of the visiting Germans, the Army points out, have been carefully screened on the basis of knowledge of English, age, present position, educational background, and experience.

Edward Crane, president of D. Van Nostrand and chairman of the publishing group which visited Germany, has been selected as chairman of the American Book Publishers Council's sponsoring committee.

The general trade publishers comprising this group of Germans are: Dr. Fritz Woelcken, chief editor of the Paul List Publishing Co., Munich; Lothar Blanvalet, owner of the Blanvalet Publishing Co., Berlin; Heinrich Ledig-Rowohlt, owner of Rowohlt Publishing Co., Stuttgart; Friedrich Truejen, owner of the Friedrich Truejen Book Publishing Co., Bremen; Ernst Klett, owner of the Klett Publishing Co., Stuttgart; Vittorio Klostermann, owner of Vittorio Klostermann Publishing Co., Frankfort-Main; Ernst R. Strunk, manager of Deutscher Verlag, Berlin; Diedrich Kenneweg, editor of *Quick;* and Berthold Spangenberg, assistant editor, Nymphenburg Publishing Co., Munich.

The Foreign Education Committee of the American Textbook Publishers Institute, the chairman of which is Charles E. Griffith of Silver Burdett who was in charge of preparing last year's book trade pamphlet entitled "Books in World Rehabilitation" (*PW*, May 1, 1948), will sponsor the following textbook publishers and textbook writers: Margarete Lande, publisher of her own firm in Stuttgart; Max Bott, in charge of textbooks at the Ministry of Culture, Stuttgart; Fritz Poerschke, Leibniz Verlag, Munich; Dr. Max Jos. Schuberth, director of the Bayerischer Schulbuch Verlag, Bavaria; Dr. Ursula Fritsch, scientific reference schoolbook publishing branch in Braunschweig, British Zone; and Karl Mildenberger, Offenburg, French Zone. The

five textbook writers are: Dr. Kurt DeBus, Frankfurt; Rudolf Haas, Kuenzelsau; Hinrich Kimme, Bremen; Juergen Krause, Munich; Kurt Spangenberg, Berlin.

COURT GRANTS VIKING INJUNCTION AGAINST COSMOPOLITAN

Justice Ernest E. I. Hammer in Supreme Court on March 29 restrained *Cosmopolitan* magazine from further advertising its condensed version of Gene Fowler's "Beau James" as a book-length biography. Viking Press which will publish the book on April 8 brought suit against Hearst Magazines Inc. on March 10 (*PW*, March 19). Justice Hammer reserved for trial the part of the motion that sought to recall unsold copies and asked for advertising to correct the impression of the original ads. Harold Guinzberg, president of Viking Press, feels the decision is a moral victory, supporting the claim that the advertising was improper.

COUNCIL ASKS HOUSE GROUP TO OPPOSE OBSCENITY BILL

Arthur E. Farmer of Stern and Reubens, as attorney for the American Book Publishers Council, has written to Congressman Emanuel Celler of the House Committee on the Judiciary, to point out dangers in a proposed bill, H.R. 1954, entitled "A Bill to Prohibit Transportation of Obscene Literature in Interstate or Foreign Commerce."

Acknowledging that the purpose of the bill is "undoubtedly to block up a loophole in the federal obscenity statutes," Mr. Farmer said that "in the Council's opinion the dangers of the bill far outweigh the good which it may accomplish."

The bill makes it a criminal offense to transport in interstate commerce "any obscene, lewd, lascivious or commonly regarded filthy book, pamphlet, picture, motion picture, film paper, letter . . ." The Council objects to the phrase "or commonly regarded filthy," which, Mr. Farmer contended, would make the courts censors of propriety, a function that has been condemned by many courts; the phrase also appears to be unconstitutional, in the light of a Supreme Court decision of 1931; and it would be an invitation to mis-application by narrow-minded persons.

More fundamentally, Mr. Farmer wrote, "although it is probable that the statute is aimed at the itinerant peddler of pornography, it is not so limited," and would provide an opportunity for blackmailers. There are sufficient statutes already on the books of the states and the Federal government, Mr. Farmer said, to control the publication, transportation and sale of obscene material. He therefore asked Mr. Celler's committee not to report the bill favorably.

PUBLICITY FOR BOOK FAIR AT ABA CONVENTION, MAY 19

Gladys M. Jeselsohn, manager of Pursell's Book Store, Washington, is working on the local committee's publicity plans to attract the public to the Trade Exhibit at the ABA Convention in Washington, on May 19, when the exhibit will be thrown open to the public as a book fair.

Washington authors whose publishers are exhibiting at the convention, and any publishers' publicity directors who are interested in special events connected with the exhibit, are asked to get in touch with Mrs. Jeselsohn. Pursell's is at 807 G Street, NW, Washington 1, District 1541-2.

ABA CONVENTION PLANS NEAR COMPLETION

Plans for the ABA Convention are practically completed. As this issue went to press, 460 hotel rooms had been reserved for booksellers, publishers and others planning to attend the Convention which will be held at the Shoreham, Washington, D. C., May 15-18. Indications point to a heavy attendance with every part of the country represented, including an unusually good cross-section of the Midwest. There are still some hotel rooms available, and the ABA